

**From:** jgedwards@westnet.com.au [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 9 December 2011 2:23 PM  
**To:** secretariat@rtirc.gov.au  
**Subject:** Submission

My name is Gay Edwards, I live at Kadnook, we are ten minutes from the nearest town which is Edenhope, this my submission.

I would like to share some of my experiences using telecommunications where I live in rural Victoria.

By sending this email it is obvious that I am connected to the internet, I have a satellite on the roof of my home and I am pleased that allows me access, however the connection is considerably slower than others who are able to use forms of broadband in the towns and in the city. When people come and stay I always get the comment of how slow my connection is, I don't realise because I am just used to it and it is better than none. I use the internet to communicate with friends and family with email, facebook and skype, also Centrelink and other Government bodies like you to contact them via the internet, filling out online forms to update records. Most companies prefer to email out accounts these days instead of sending out paper bills. I often have problems with my connection when there is wind about or if there are storms about in the area. My connection does also tend to quite expensive compared to family and friends in the city, I am not able to bundle any phone and internet services as Telstra and Optus cannot provide broadband to me. I had to use another provider.

Now for the home phone, I don't a choice of provider for my home phone as only Telstra is available here. When I lived in the city I was able to have a choice, that also meant that I could bundle home phone, mobile and internet. The community here have had ongoing problems with home phone connections. In the past 12 months I have rung and complained about the connection once every couple of months from various probles like no phone at all [dead line] and scratchy interfrance when making calls, conversations dropping in and out. Each time I call the call centre I feel like they treat me with disrespect and do not want to take responsibility for any fault, however every time it has been a fault with their antiquated exchange which is located three kilometres up the road. Each time I have to call them to make a complaint I have to drive five kilometres towards the nearest town to gain mobile reception to make the call.

Now for mobile reception, there is none here at my home. There is some patchy reception out in the paddock but the call is always hit and miss if it is going to drop out. There was a new Optus tower installed in Harrow which is 25km away but this has not helped here at all. I am employed by the local Shire Council doing Home and Community Care, this job sends me all over the Shire assisting the elderly and disabled in their homes with personal care and home care. If I need to call in to the office for any reason I have to use the clients home phone because my mobile does not get service. If I am unable to find a new clients home I am stuck because I would have to go to another property and ask for directions or ask to use their phone.

I am a member of the local CFA, it is quite a problem not having any mobile

reception and then an unreliable fixed line as well, I'm VERY concerned about communicating with members of our community when there is a turn out. When we get onto the fire truck to respond to an incident we can be on there for hours at a time, we need to let our family members know where we are. We make calls to put together crews to come onto the truck in shifts. Some of this can be done via the UHF but then the communications officer has to ring around, all within this area which is a dead spot.

Thank you for allowing me to have a voice.

Gay Edwards